
Community Service Learning

Illinois

4-H CAN Make a Difference

Situation:

The Illinois Hunger Coalition reports that more than 1.5 million Illinois citizens go hungry each year, half of whom are children. Unfortunately, these numbers are continuing to increase.

Illinois 4-H youth were shocked to learn of this large number — especially considering that Illinois is one of the world’s greatest food producers. Summer months are particularly critical for local food banks, pantries, and shelters. According to the Illinois Food Bank Association, supplies accumulated during the holiday season are typically depleted by mid-June. In addition, many families’ food budgets are stretched to the maximum during this time, as children who use government subsidized meal programs during the school year are at home. As a result, many parents must turn to food banks and pantries to make up for the extra demand on their family budgets. The 4-H CAN Make a Difference campaign calls attention to this critical need.

Program Description:

Each of the 1,820 Illinois 4-H community-based clubs are encouraged to partner with local shelters, meal programs, and/or food pantries to give youth a first-hand experience of the problem and determine how they can be part of the solution. Hunger information packets, club project planning guides, and “ideas that work” booklets were developed and distributed to each club. The clubs collaborate with local groups to design and implement unique hunger-related projects. The 4-H CAN Make a Difference program: 1) unites 4-H youth with individuals, civic organizations, educational groups, media, corporations, and industries in a campaign to eliminate hunger; 2) creates awareness about hunger through state and local efforts and identifies ways everyone can be part of the solution; 3) mobilizes 4-H youth and their partners to collect and distribute thousands of pounds of food for citizens in need; 4) engages 4-H youth as volunteers at local food pantries and shelters; 5) enhances youth leadership, citizenship, and communication skills; and 6) develops caring spirits in youth.

Highly visible state-level activities call attention to this important 4-H initiative. They include 4-H CAN Make a Difference food drives at the Illinois State Fair, DuQuoin State Fair, University of Illinois, National Sweet Corn Festival, county fairs, and community festivals. Hunger-related 4-H displays at these events create awareness and help citizens learn how they can get involved. During these events, 4-H youth construct a “house” made out of donated food products. The 4-H house of food symbolizes 4-H youths’ hopes that pantry shelves in every home are stocked with food. All donations are delivered to Illinois Food Banks/Second Harvest Network. The traveling exhibit includes interactive hunger-related information, games, and activities. The Illinois First Lady is Honorary Chair of the 4-H CAN Make a Difference

campaign. The First Lady's involvement expands involvement, enhances media interest, and increases visibility for the project.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

The 4-H CAN Make a Difference project unites 4-H community-based clubs around a common concern. The program provides high visibility to local 4-H community action initiatives and helps to reposition the 4-H image. The program receives high marks from 4-H youth, adult volunteers, and Extension staff representatives on the State 4-H Advisory Council. Government officials, agencies, and corporations have been quick to partner with the program because of the quality of work accomplished, the high visibility of the program, and concern about hunger. Corporate and agency partners have increased participation in this project in the past 4 years. The Illinois First Lady has consistently praised the program verbally and in writing. Illinois Food Banks/Second Harvest Network presented 4-H with the Statewide Food Drive of the Year Award for outstanding leadership and contributions.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Last year, Illinois 4-H youth collected more than 68 tons of food and donated more than 187,000 hours of volunteer service at local food banks, pantries, shelters, and meal programs throughout the state. Thousands of families throughout Illinois have been helped by this important humanitarian effort. Illinois Food Banks estimate that more than 110,000 hungry citizens have been fed as a result of the 4-H food collections. The number of citizens that 4-H has helped has grown steadily each of the past 4 years. A survey of 4-H clubs revealed that 84% of all youth participating in local efforts learned more about the problem of hunger and that 68% of the youth reported that they planned to continue working on this initiative.

Resource Commitment:

Illinois 4-H received a \$4,300 grant from Kraft Foods, Inc. to help with this unique project. The State 4-H Office provided funds for student internships to help coordinate state level activities. University of Illinois Extension 4-H marketing funds support the development of 4-H club/group educational materials, the traveling display, and promotion of the program. Illinois commodity groups, corporations, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture provide funds and in-kind contributions to assist with the program implementation.

Collaborators:

Illinois 4-H Ambassadors provide youth leadership for this statewide project. Food Bank and Hunger Coalition officials assist with the development of club/group materials and the traveling display. The Department of Agriculture incorporates the program as a major feature at the Illinois State Fair and the DuQuoin State Fair. Food manufacturers donate food products and provide financial support. Commodity groups provide funds to help promote the program and product coupons to encourage citizen involvement. United Parcel Service distributes promotional flyers and transports donations to area food banks. John Deere provides vehicles to transport food donations at local events. Illinois Farm Broadcasters publicize the program. Cellular One and Global Technical Services facilitate communications. Several corporations collect food items at local stores and provide product incentives and other in-kind donations.

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies to:

Nutrition, Diet, & Health

Tennessee

4-H Seeds of Service

Situation:

Service learning is a growing trend for today's youth. Many schools have a service requirement for graduation, and scholarships are increasingly based on community involvement. As the world's largest youth development organization, 4-H has always been committed to helping the community. Now, however, the focus has shifted to service *learning*, a process by which youth volunteers learn and develop as they meet real community needs. Tennessee 4-H staff saw the potential for the integration of this concept into existing 4-H programming. With the help of a Learn and Serve grant from the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service, extension personnel developed the 4-H Seeds of Service (S.O.S.) program. 4-H S.O.S. is designed as a resource to educate 4-H'ers and adults about service learning and to help them turn their community service into a true learning experience.

Program Description:

The target audience of 4-H S.O.S. is both rural and urban and spans the entire state. To help youth, volunteers, and extension staff understand the concept of service learning, the 4-H S.O.S. coordinator conducted workshops for more than 500 youth and adults. She also developed a website (<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4h/sos>) devoted to service learning through 4-H. Twenty-three youth-led groups received mini-grants of up to \$1,000 to fund service projects in 18 counties. In addition to service projects conducted on the county level, statewide events such as 4-H Congress, Junior High Academic Conference, Teen Adventure Weekend, and 4-H Roundup included a service learning component.

The goal of 4-H S.O.S. is to educate and encourage Tennessee 4-H'ers to be actively engaged in service. Through service, 4-H youth can develop leadership, citizenship, communication, and teamwork skills. They also can learn more about their chosen 4-H subject area, such as horticulture or sewing. Their service efforts will reach thousands of residents in almost every county in the state.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

In addition to the program coordinator, 66 FTE's committed 5% of their time to service learning and one FTE committed 10%. More than 60,000 4-H'ers conducted 1,060 service learning projects in 89 counties. This surpassed the original goal of 750 projects. Four-H'ers of all ages

were able to participate and be leaders in service activities, thereby increasing their learning experience. Most 4-H'ers reported that they enjoyed helping others, and 100% of 445 evaluated projects were rated effective by community beneficiaries.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Four-H youth, adult volunteers, and staff conducted 1,060 service learning projects. Projects were categorized by priority areas, as determined by the Corporation for National Service. Tennessee 4-H'ers served in the following areas: environment (11,517 in 160 projects), health (5,925 in 96 projects), public safety (608 in 9 projects), education (2,565 in 121 projects), other human needs (20,661 in 443 projects). Nearly 20,000 4-H'ers served in miscellaneous other projects, including 22 projects for animal shelters.

A total of 64,646 4-H youth and adults dedicated more than 90,500 hours to service learning. This time is valued at more than \$466,000 if calculated by the minimum wage of \$5.15.

4-H'ers participating in service learning projects reported learning a variety of things. Some 4-H'ers learned more about their community, facts about health-related issues, how to landscape, not to litter, how to work together to help others, and how to appreciate what they have. Project groups participating in service were able to increase and utilize skills learned through 4-H project work, such as organic gardening methods or how horses are used in therapy for the physically challenged.

Resource Commitment:

The Tennessee 4-H program received a \$128,000 Learn and Serve grant from Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service.

Collaborators:

More than 4,000 Extension staff and 4-H volunteer leaders have worked to increase youth service across Tennessee. They have collaborated with other agencies, such as United Way, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, schools, and nursing homes to meet real community needs. Tennessee's Points of Light Foundation, YES (Youth Engaged in Service) Ambassadors, and members of the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service have all provided assistance with training, promotion, and resources for the program.

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies to:

Leadership & Volunteer Development

The Art of Friendship and Service Learning

Situation:

The program's goal was to create an interesting expressive arts project for 4-H youth, ages 12-18, while providing opportunities for service learning hours.

Program Description:

The Deer's Head Center, a state rehabilitation and long-term care facility was the first site piloted. 4-H youth would develop personalized ceiling murals for bed-bound residents based on the residents' interests. Each mural was composed of four 12"x12" ceiling tiles. Each tile had a separate painting which related to a specific resident. The goal was to finish the 60-mural project in two years.

The Holly Center, a state facility for mentally retarded individuals, was the second site chosen. This program was two days in length. Ten youth ages 12-18 participated in the workshop. The Holly Center provided educators an opportunity to conduct workshops that included: "What is Mental Retardation?", "Orientation to Disabilities," and hands-on simulations of specific disabilities. The hands-on experiences included simulated activities for hearing, speech, visual (including dyslexia), and physical disabilities. Teams of two youth were assigned to interact with Center residents. These individuals required the highest level of care that Holly Center provides. (Holly Center refers to their residents as individuals.) Youth interviewed the nursing staff, researched personal history, and conducted a visual experiment. The purpose of the experiment was to watch for response to visual stimuli. Youth compiled results and created a personalized 20"x24" canvas painting for each individual. The paintings will be hung over each individual's activity area.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

The Deer's Head Center component of the project meets one time per month for 1½ hours. The Deer's Head Center staff has expressed high satisfaction with the murals and are funding the cost of all materials for the 60 murals. Ninety percent of youth are continuing with this project. The Holly Center sent a written statement of high satisfaction with the results and ten completed paintings. The youth expressed satisfaction with this project.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Six completed murals, which include 24 high-quality individual paintings, are completed and were hung over six residents' beds at Deer's Head Center. Four-H'ers have completed 120 hours of community service. One hundred percent of youth expressed that they felt more comfortable interacting with individuals with disabilities. An appreciation ice cream party was given for 4-H youth by Holly Center.

Resource Commitment:

Both facilities funded the program.

Collaborators:

Deer's Head Center, The Holly Center, Wicomico County 4-H Youth Development Program.

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*Mississippi***TEAM (Therapeutic Riding Activity Member)****Situation:**

In the state of Mississippi there are more than 500,000 people with some type of disability. Therapeutic riding is a specialized equine activity that provides physical, emotional, and psychological benefits to individuals with special needs. Through carefully planned activities developed by a health professional and a certified riding instructor, the horse is used as a treatment tool to help the rider achieve his or her goals. With the increasing awareness of the positive benefits of therapeutic riding, many individuals, civic groups, and therapists are seeking guidance in developing a therapeutic riding program in their community.

Program Description:

The Mississippi State University Extension Service's 4-H TEAM is a program that promotes therapeutic riding through educational and research-based activities. The goal of the TEAM program is to develop a model therapeutic riding center based on North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) guidelines, which regulate consistent safety and professional standards. Individuals of all ages and disabilities can benefit from therapeutic riding. Four-H clubs can provide the necessary volunteer services for programs and benefit from their experience at the same time.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

The community, state, and Southeast region have welcomed the leadership that TEAM has provided in the therapeutic riding profession. The state has had three new centers open statewide this year, and its state membership in NARHA has doubled.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

The Mississippi State University 4-H TEAM hosted the NARHA Region Five Conference in August 2001. More than 100 instructors, health professionals, parents, and volunteers from 7 states attended the 3-day conference, which consisted of 10 workshops and demonstrations on therapeutic riding. The TEAM program hosts two 8-week riding sessions a year, with a minimum of 10 riders, 20 volunteers, one riding instructor, and two physical therapists. The region five volunteer of the year for 2001 was selected from the TEAM program.

Collaborators:

MSU Extension Service, Oktibbeha County Hospital, 4-H agents and members, North American Riding for the Handicapped Association

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Kentucky

Child 2000: Youth Development Partnership

Program Description:

A private-public partnership between the Kentucky 4-H program and Kentucky Child Now! provides the foundation for bringing together key stakeholders to address the needs of Kentucky's young people. The Partnership is a collaborative effort with over 20 state agencies, private non-profit organizations and community-based organizations working to promote Positive Youth Development and collaboration at all levels across the commonwealth. The target audience for the Partnership includes state agencies, community-based youth service providers, community leaders and young people.

The vision for the partnership is: Youth are respected, valued, and have access to the resources, opportunities and support they need to be healthy and successful. The goals for the Partnership are: 1) **YOUTH INVOLVEMENT:** Youth are involved in the planning, governance, assessment, and delivery of youth policy and services. 2) **COMMUNITY AWARENESS:** Youth, families and communities have knowledge of positive youth development and the skills and ability to build healthy and successful youth. 3) **A NETWORK OF SUPPORT:** Youth support system will have the support of a statewide network to facilitate coordination, collaboration, and communication. 4) **TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:** Youth support system will have access to training, technical assistance, and resources to support and implement the youth development approach. 5) **YOUTH POLICY:** Kentucky will adopt state-level youth development policies based on the youth development approach.

No one sector, acting alone, can ensure that all young people acquire the competencies, character and protection they need to seize the opportunities that lie ahead. It is a team effort and everyone has a role to play.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

4-H has one and one half FTEs committed to the implementation of this project, of which one is funded through a federal grant. The Partnership Task Force, made up of twenty organizations from the state and local levels, meets on a monthly basis with and provides leadership and planning for the Partnership. Activities fall under each of the five results; Youth Involvement, Community Awareness, A Network Of Support, Training & Technical Assistance, Youth Policy, and are tailored to address the four target audiences; state agencies, community-based youth service providers, community leaders and young people. Activities are based upon expressed needs through focus groups and needs assessments conducted with the target audiences, and evaluations have been very positive expressing great stakeholder satisfaction with services. Recurring participation in workgroups and special events have been high, also denoting high satisfaction with the efforts of the Partnership activities.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Major accomplishments of the Partnership has been the strengthening of relationships and strategic focus of the Partnership which has resulted in expanded scope and participation on the Task Force and increasing potential impact of promoting positive change in the outcomes. The implementation of the Search Institute's Developmental Assets survey on a statewide basis has resulted in the development or strengthening of community efforts in twenty-two communities across the state. A recent workshop on youth adult partnerships, interpreting survey results, and developing communication plans has led to more sharing of resources and tools among community efforts. The publication of an eight-page "Spot Light Youth" brochure has highlighted community efforts and over fifteen thousand have been distributed to individuals throughout the commonwealth.

Resource Commitment:

The Partnership is funded through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families, Family Youth Services Bureau, State Youth Development Collaboration Demonstration grant for a three-year period for \$120,000.00 per year.

Collaborators:

Members of the Partnership includes: Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice, Kentucky Child Now!, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Department, Office of Family Leadership, Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Volunteers of America, Cabinet for Families & Children, Kentucky Agency for Substance Abuse Policy, Sign of the Dove Church, Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism & Service, Partners for Youth Foundation, Kentucky's Youth United, Office of Family Resource and Youth Service Centers, Kentucky Office of School-to-Work, Cabinet for Health Services, Kentucky Department of Education, YMCA National Safe Place, and the Girl Scouts Wilderness Road Council.

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Other Base Program Areas this Program Applies to:

Community Resource & Economic Development, Leadership and Volunteer Development

Maryland

4-H: Make a Difference Program

Situation:

In Caroline County the Caroline County Human Services Council provides opportunities for community based agencies to apply for grant funds to support youth/families. By taking advantage of funds provided by a small grant the Caroline County 4-H Educator and Program Assistant have included ninety-five 4-H members in the program. Youth gave of time and talents to make a positive impact in our county. Following the specified outcomes in the grant youth learned CharacterCounts! issues and became better students and members of their family unit by practicing being respectful, using good manners, etc. Additionally, 4-H members learned new skills as they served others.

A series of “Make A Difference Day” events was held. Many tasks were accomplished as youth and adults worked together. 4-H members learned skills in character issues, woodworking, electricity, sewing, nutrition and kitchen science. Through hands on experiences 4-Hers gained skills in team work, cooperation, problem solving, and contributing to a group effort.

Program Description:

The rural audience included ninety-five 4-H members, twenty members of the Choptank Ruritan Club, fifteen members of the Caroline County 4-H All Stars, and the 4-H county extension faculty and staff.

The 4-H Park belongs to the county and is in great need of a variety of repairs, house cleaning, and improvements. 4-H youth use the facilities free of charge, on an ongoing basis and have traditionally held a sense of pride in helping to maintain the facility. The need is always great to make improvements. This grant provided for making repairs to tables and chairs, cleaning and painting cabinets, cleaning kitchen utensils and repairing exhibit display cases housed at the park. Complete cleaning and painting of storage cabinets in the kitchen/ workroom area helped to conserve supplies and plan for future needs. Several sewed lap robes for patients in the local nursing homes as a means of thinking of the needs of others.

Twenty-five 4-H members made posters to hang in locations around the county emphasizing the pillars of character and the need for all to be good citizens.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

The 4-H Educator and program assistant provided time on an as needed basis. Both were in attendance at each of the four “Make A Difference” programs. The participants varied from helping each time to only attending one session. Every participant gained personal satisfaction in accomplishing some task to make the county 4-H Park a better place.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

4-H members each earned an average of 15 hours of community service as they worked on various projects. Youth participants earned great satisfaction in working with the 4-H All– Star and Ruritan members. The adults gained a better awareness of the willingness of the 4-H members to learn life skills.

Resource Commitment:

The grant from the Caroline County Human Services Council provided \$500 for “Make A Difference” events. The money paid for cleaning supplies, paint, goggles to protect eyes, electric and woodworking supplies. Additionally, funds were used to purchase poster board and supplies to make posters. Shrubs will be purchased and planted this fall to enhance the landscaping around a new meeting building at the park.

Collaborators:

Volunteers listed above staffed the program. It is interesting to add that county officials also helped to repair and improve the facilities as we worked together to make improvements (county treasurer, and the county administrator).

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Other Base Programs this program applies to:

Leadership and Volunteer Development, Community Resource & Economic Development

Impact of 4-H Service on Communities

Situation:

4-H has a long tradition of providing community service opportunities for youth and volunteers, yet no effort had been made to determine how much service is actually done or what the quantifiable value is of that service. Extension staff was asked to collect summaries for a 12-month period from volunteers regarding service projects conducted and the number of youth and adults involved and the amount of time spent on those projects.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Based upon the US Department of Labor minimum wage, the 217 4-H clubs that reported service hours made a \$5,489,274.28 impact on Oklahoma communities. The survey of Oklahoma 4-H clubs indicated that 4-H members and leaders make significant contributions to their communities through community service projects.

Of the 77 counties in Oklahoma, 58 (75.32 percent) reported community service projects during the reporting period. Those reports represented 1,308 total service projects that involved a total of 19,001 4-H Youth. As there were 21,646 members enrolled in community 4-H clubs at the time, it can be assumed that many youth participated in multiple projects during the reporting period and that many did projects that were not reported. Of the state's 936 recognized clubs 23.18 percent (217) of the clubs submitted one or more reports. Forty-three of the counties that submitted reports provided 40 or more entries or activities.

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

The findings of the study indicate that many 4-H clubs actively conduct community service projects as a part of the total 4-H learning experience even though some clubs appear to do significantly more projects than do others. One county submitted reports that summarized 123 different activities while others reported only one.

The reports indicate that the promotion of food and fiber is an important part of the 4-H experience for some youth in Oklahoma with those who participated in this area recording large numbers of hours. While this topic had the largest number of hours reported, it was discovered that in selected counties this was attributed to a few major projects such as learning labs and demonstrations at fairs and other events.

Some of the other projects that involved large number of youth included working with children and youth, helping the disadvantaged, and promoting safety and healthy living, and helping people with disabilities.

Leaders played a major role in supporting youth in clubs. The study showed that they provided large numbers of hours in supporting the 4-H program in general with 1,881 reports representing 15,885 hours of service related to this area.

Less than 1/4 of the 4-H clubs in Oklahoma actually submitted reports. It is not known if the non-respondents were similar to those who reported or if they did more or fewer projects. The impact reported is great and is only possible as a result of the contributions of time and other resources by both salaried and volunteer staff.

Resource Commitment:

No new funds were required. Educators and volunteers were asked for a commitment of time in order to collect and report the data.

Collaborators:

County staff and volunteers who submitted data. Graduate faculty in the Department of Agricultural Education Communications and 4-H Youth Development at Oklahoma State University.

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Other Base program areas this program applies to:

Community Resource and Economic Development
